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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/940,441	08/29/2001	Kenji Matsuda	684.3242	5068

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EXAMINER

BRASE, SANDRA L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2852

DATE MAILED: 03/06/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/940,441

Applicant(s)

MATSUDA ET AL.

Examiner

Sandra L. Brase

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 December 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-10 and 12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-10 and 12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

3. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okada et al. (US 5,737,675) in view of Nakano et al. (US 5,363,177).

Okada et al. (...675) disclose an image forming apparatus comprising: an image bearing member (41) and a developing means (43) for developing a latent image formed on the image bearing member. A developer supply container (200) is detachably mountable to the image forming apparatus, where the developer supply container includes: a developer accommodating portion (201); a developer discharging portion (203); and a cover (250) covering the developer

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discharging portion. The cover is movable between a first position in which the cover covers the developer discharging portion and a second position in which the developer discharging portion is exposed, where the second position is closer to the developer accommodating portion than the first position (figures 3 and 6). A rail guides the movement of the cover, where the rail includes a first guiding portion for guiding the cover to move in parallel with the developer accommodating portion and a second guiding portion for guiding the cover toward the developer accommodating portion, and a projection is abutted by the cover, wherein when the container is mounted to the main assembly, the cover abuts the projection so that movement of the cover is regulated, and wherein the cover moves from the first position to the second position with a mounting action of the container to the main assembly of the apparatus (col. 7, line 15 – col. 8, line 50). The discharging portion is provided with a hole (202) for permitting passage of developer. However, Okada et al. (...675) do not disclose the claimed tape, and a shutter inside the cover. Nakano et al. (...177) disclose a tape (3) that seals a hole (31) in a discharge portion of a developer supply container when the container has not been used (col. 7, lines 50-54), where the tape is peeled off when a cover is moved from a closed position to an open position (col. 8, lines 20-65). A shutter (2) is inside the cover (1) and closes and opens a discharge hole in the container. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the claimed tape so as to seal an opening of a developer container, as disclosed by Nakano et al. (...177), and it would have also been obvious to have a shutter inside the cover since it is a well known configuration for closing and opening a hole in a discharge portion of a developer supplying container, as disclosed by Nakano et al. (...177).

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4. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okada et al. (US 5,737,675) in view of Nakano et al. (US 5,363,177) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Kawakami et al. (JP 11-095638).

Okada et al. (...675) in view of Nakano et al. (...177) disclose the features mentioned previously, but do not disclose the claimed urging means. Kawakami et al. (...638) disclose a developer supply container (5) including a cover (6) that is urged to a closing position by an urging means (66) when the container is out of an image forming apparatus (abstract). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the claimed urging means so as to provide a force to urge the container cover to a closed position, as disclosed by Kawakami et al. (...638).

5. Claims 10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okada et al. (US 5,737,675) in view of Nakano et al. (US 5,363,177) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Lee (US 5,708,912).

Okada et al. (...675) in view of Nakano et al. (...177) disclose the features mentioned previously, and Okada et al. (...675) disclose the hole in the discharge portion opening in response to the relative movement between the container and the developing means. However, Okada et al. (...675) and Nakano et al. (...912) do not disclose the developing means with the image bearing member detachably mountable to the main assembly of the image forming apparatus. Lee (...912) discloses an image forming apparatus including an image bearing member (41) and a developing means (46) provided in a cartridge (A2) that is detachably mountable to the main assembly of the image forming apparatus (col. 3, line 57 – col. 4, line 12).

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It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the developing means and the image bearing member detachably mountable to the main assembly so as to facilitate replacement when it is determined that either one is expended, as disclosed by Lee (...912).

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Final Rejection

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

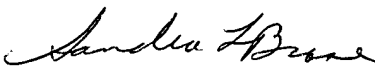
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Contacts \ Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sandra L. Brase whose telephone number is (703) 308-3101.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Arthur T. Grimley, can be reached on (703) 308-1373. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 305-3431 or 305-3432.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.


Sandra L. Brase
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2852

March 5, 2003